

Summary of EDC Comments on the Economic Development Element of the Proposed Comp Plan

Generally, the EDC members who have responded thought that the Economic Development Element of the proposed Comp Plan is fine. It recognizes that the City needs to have a more balanced and diversified tax base, that it needs to create local employment paying a living wage and that it realizes that funding for public services through the one-time revenue streams associated with construction and real estate transactions is not sustainable as the revenue generated will not be at levels that the City has enjoyed in the past. It also recognizes that the supply of property to develop new economic opportunities is not abundant, so the efforts to succeed with the property available needs to be focused. Also, the attention to business retention and expansion of existing businesses is good.

Here is a summary of comments made by the EDC members who responded:

- 1) It is good that improving the working relationship with the City and the local Chamber is mentioned. As in all relationships, both sides will have to gain a better understanding and appreciation of each other's perspective: City focusing on what is best for the entire community and its 25,000 population and the Chamber focusing on what supports its business community.
- 2) Marketing the City to developers and brokers is important. The City does need to develop good marketing materials, using the good data it has put together over that last few years. Yet, there is no mention that the property owners need to associate themselves with reputable and effective commercial brokers to specifically market its property to investors. As the City will market the community as a whole, the individual property owners need to focus on selling their property with/to well-connected commercial brokers and developers.
- 3) Any marketing done by the City needs to focus on the type of businesses it wants to have in the City. A shotgun approach does not provide necessarily good results for the community. If, for example, the City wants to attract advanced manufacturing to the Donut Hole by using the regional educational center as an anchor, future zoning codes need to be tight enough to limit development to those related industries.
- 4) One of those commenting felt that the last two lines on page 3, "Rapidly approaching build-out of available residential lots", should be in bold and in all capital letters.
- 5) One of the members did not understand the statement under strengths that stated, "Paving the way for our City's current and future needs, like the addition of the Fred Meyer complex and associated businesses." These businesses are here. Is this a statement advocating for more developments that include general sales tax generating businesses?
- 6) An EDC member would like to see a deeper explanation of the term "No Program of Work" as listed on page 7. As the Comp Plan is a major policy document for the City as a whole, there should be recognition that economic development efforts have been undertaken by the City, but that more needs to be done to ensure sustainability of funding public services.
- 7) Under "Expanded Contributions of the EDC" a member would like to see some wording like the following: The members of future EDCs be specifically chosen for their unique positions within companies, for their skill sets, for their networks with the economic development and investment communities and represent both local and regional perspectives..."
- 8) Finally, in the "Competitive Analysis: Fiber Capacity", there is no mention of the new company, WAVE, that recently entered into a franchise agreement with the City, or Comcast, a company that offers both residential and commercial broadband services. Both should be included.

Other than these specific comments, the members who commented felt this is good step on including, for the first time, economic development within the City's Comp Plan.